

10-25 Policy Matters

Subject: Advocating for Healthy Aging Across Our Communities

Preheader: Here, Policy Matters. Learn the latest from UPMC's Government Relations team.



As of 2025, 19.0% of Pennsylvania's population is aged 65 and older, reflecting a growing need for focused care strategies to support healthy aging among our communities.

UPMC is deeply committed to enhancing the lives of older adults through a multifaceted approach that blends compassionate care, research and clinical excellence, and community engagement.

At the heart of this mission is UPMC Senior Services, which provides integrated medical, social, and educational resources tailored to the unique needs of older adults and promotes healthy aging. UPMC's dedication extends to training health care professionals in geriatric care and advancing research geared toward older adults.

UPMC also continues to lead in geriatric care, as showcased at the City & State 2025 Aging Summit, active participation in senior fairs and expos across Pennsylvania, and more.

By fostering outreach, empowering caregivers, and leading innovative initiatives, UPMC sets a standard in senior care and healthy aging, ensuring that aging is not only supported but celebrated through compassionate, evidence-based practices and community engagement initiatives. This edition of *Policy Matters* spotlights a few of the many initiatives from UPMC and UPMC Health Plan that support the aging population.



## **Empowering Aging Communities: UPMC's Strategic Commitment to Senior Wellness**



## **UPMC's Dr. David Nace Attended PALTmed Advocacy Summit**

David A. Nace, MD, MPH, attended the Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association's Advocacy Summit in Washington, D.C., where he met with members of Pennsylvania's congressional delegation, including Reps. Chris DeLuzio, Brian Fitzpatrick, and Senator Dave McCormick (pictured). Dr. Nace advocated for the CONNECT for Health Act, highlighting the need to expand telehealth access and address dementia care disparities in rural Pennsylvania through the Rural Health Transformation Fund.



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## **UPMC Participates in City & State PA's 2025 Aging Summit**

UPMC geriatrician Adele Towers, MD, shared insights on advancing care for older adults, highlighting UPMC's pioneering initiatives such as the GUIDE program, which improves care coordination and caregiver support. Dr. Towers also discussed emerging strategies, including digital tools for early cognitive screening, and explored how health systems can align clinical excellence, technology, and compassionate care to improve health and independence for older adults.

[Learn more](#)



## **UPMC and UPMC Health Plan: Supporting Senior Wellness and Community Outreach Expos**

Senior expos play a vital role in connecting older adults with essential services, health resources, and community support. These events foster engagement, promote healthy aging, and empower seniors to make informed decisions about their well-being.

On September 26, Pennsylvania Rep. Mandy Steele hosted a Senior Resource Fair that welcomed approximately 215 attendees. The event featured a wide array of resources tailored to older adults, with UPMC and UPMC Health Plan representatives on-site to offer guidance and support.

Continuing its commitment to healthy aging, UPMC also proudly supported two additional community events on October 9: the Senior Fair hosted by Pennsylvania Sen. Jay Costa and Rep. Joe McAndrew, and the Senior Expo organized by Sen. Devlin Robinson. Both events provided valuable opportunities for seniors to access health information, connect with service providers, and engage with their local communities.

## UPMC's Rural Health Transformation Program Recommendations for Geriatric Care

UPMC is actively advancing the strategic goals of the **Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program** — workforce development, sustainable access, innovative care, technology innovation, and making rural America healthy again — by working to reimagine care delivery and ensure long-term health and well-being for rural Pennsylvanians through proposals with recommendations to strengthen the rural health system. Proposals related to aging and senior care include:

- **Center for Cognitive Health** — To improve timely dementia diagnoses, especially among older adults with limited social support or education, a statewide network of specially trained primary care providers is proposed using the Project ECHO model. This initiative aims to strengthen clinical guidance, accelerate diagnosis, and expand access to essential resources.
- **Geriatric Psychiatry Consultation Service** — To address the psychiatrist shortage in rural north central Pennsylvania, UPMC proposes expanding its Geriatric Psychiatry Consultation Service to provide timely, reimbursable support to primary care providers. This initiative aims to improve diagnosis, enhance care planning, and strengthen behavioral health outcomes for older adults.

[Learn more](#)

## Additional Senior Care Resources

- [UPMC Senior Services](#)
- [Benevolent Care and Community Outreach for Seniors](#)



**Expanding Access to Cancer Care**





[HILLMAN.UPMC.COM](https://hillman.upmc.com)

## **UPMC Hillman Completes Extensive Renovation to Expand Patient Access**

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center in Washington, Pa., recently completed a significant renovation of its medical oncology office, marking a milestone in its commitment to provide world-class cancer care close to home. This renovation ensures cancer patients in the Washington area have access to the highest level of care, clinical trials, and the latest cancer research available.

Representatives, including Brian Tirpak on behalf of Pennsylvania Sen. Camera Bartolotta and staff from the Office of U.S. Sen. Dave McCormick, attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony, underscoring the strong support for expanding local cancer care.

[Learn more](#)



**Updates from UPMC Health Plan**

## UPMC *for Life* Announces 2026 Benefits for Its Medicare Advantage Plans

UPMC Health Plan recently announced its 2026 UPMC *for Life* Medicare Advantage plan offerings. These plans highlight UPMC *for Life*'s ongoing commitment to offering stability, affordability, and value to its members through robust medical and supplemental benefits.

UPMC clinicians and UPMC *for Life* work together to provide members with high-quality, well-coordinated care. This integrated model puts the member's health at the center by connecting clinicians, care teams, and coverage so members get the right care at the right time.

[Learn more](#)



[UPMCHEALTHPLAN.COM](https://UPMCHEALTHPLAN.COM)

### ***Medicare for the Record*: UPMC Health Plan Podcast Episodes**

Each episode of *Medicare for the Record* takes on a different topic about upcoming Medicare changes, breaking it down in simple, straightforward terms with the help of expert guests. From Medicare Advantage plan changes and enrollment timelines to Medicare costs, prescription drug coverage, and more, this podcast helps consumers stay informed so they can make confident choices about their health.

[Listen now](#)





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## **UPMC Health Plan Opens Neighborhood Center in Erie**

UPMC Health Plan recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new UPMC Health Plan Neighborhood Center in Erie. The center is an innovative space that will offer residents much more than health care services.

Serving as a community hub, this new Neighborhood Center will provide food assistance, connections to local job opportunities, and referrals to childcare, transportation, and housing services. It will also offer the health and wellness and mental health services traditionally offered at UPMC locations.

[Learn more](#)

## **UPMC Leaders Discuss Workforce Development in New *Becker's Healthcare Podcast***

In a recent *Becker's Healthcare Podcast* episode, UPMC's Dan LaVallee and Brandy Hershberger, DNP, shared how the health system is creating innovative apprenticeship programs to support Medicaid members and employees in pursuing meaningful careers. They discuss workforce development, grant funding, and how these programs are shaping the future of health care talent pipelines.

[Listen now](#)

## **J.D. Power Ranks UPMC *for Life* No. 1 in Member Satisfaction Among Medicare Advantage Plans in Pennsylvania**

UPMC Health Plan's UPMC *for Life* — the Medicare Advantage plan that is part of the health plan's family of insurance and benefit management products — has earned the highest score in Pennsylvania in the J.D. Power 2025 U.S. Medicare Advantage Study<sup>SM</sup> of members' satisfaction with their Medicare Advantage health plan experiences. This is the third consecutive year that UPMC *for Life* has received this designation.

[Learn more](#)

## **Reuben Daniel, UPMC Health Plan's Associate Vice President of AI, Featured in Two Articles Discussing AI in Health Care**

- [AI with Heart: How UPMC and UPMC Health Plan Are Using Artificial Intelligence to Transform Health Care Outcomes](#)
- [AI in Health Care: Balancing Governance, Innovation, and Trust](#)

## **The Pharmacist's Role in Vaccine Awareness and Immunization Efforts**

In a new three-part series, UPMC Health Plan pharmacist Alyssa Modic, PharmD, talks about the pharmacist's role in vaccine awareness and immunization efforts in these *Pharmacy Times* video interviews.

- [Part 1: Pharmacists Must Stay Informed, Advocate Amid Evolving COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#)
- [Part 2: Pharmacists Simplify Pneumococcal Vaccine Guidance While Addressing Vaccine Fatigue in Adults](#)
- [Part 3: Pharmacists Play Key Role in Expanding RSV Vaccine Awareness, Adult Immunization Efforts](#)

# Oral Health Services and Outreach Strategy in Rural Pennsylvania Communities

In this two-part series with *American Journal of Managed Care*, UPMC Health Plan Dental Care Management staff talk about their oral health services outreach strategy and its impact in rural communities across Pennsylvania.

- [Part 1: Improving Oral Health Through Education and Outreach with UPMC Health Plan Dental Care Managers](#)
- [Part 2: UPMC Health Plan Dental Care Managers Forging Community Relationships](#)

## Stay Informed

UPMC's Government Affairs Team is committed to delivering relevant and timely news on the latest health care trends, medical research, and clinical developments as they relate to public health issues.

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